United Nations A/C.1/54/L.42

General Assembly

Distr.: Limited
25 October 1999

Original: English

Fifty-fourth session
First Committee
Agenda item 76 (f)
General and complete disarmament: small arms

Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Ecuador, Guinea, Hungary, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Madagascar, Mexico, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Philippines, Republic of Korea, San Marino, Solomon Islands, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Togo: draft resolution

Small arms

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 50/70 B of 12 December 1995, 52/38 J of 9 December 1997 and 53/77 E of 4 December 1998,

Reaffirming the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and the commitment of Member States to take concrete steps in order to strengthen that role,

Recognizing the importance of the role of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, in preventing and reducing the excessive and destabilizing accumulations of small arms and light weapons,

Convinced of the need for a comprehensive approach to promote, at the global and regional levels, the control and reduction of small arms and light weapons in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner as a contribution to international peace and security,

Bearing in mind Security Council resolution 1209 (1998) of 19 November 1998 on illicit arms flows to and in Africa and the statement by the President of the Security Council of 24 September 1999 on behalf of the Council in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Small arms",[1]

Taking note of the complementarity of the efforts to prevent and reduce the excessive and destabilizing accumulation and transfer of small arms and light weapons and the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of a Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, including a protocol to combat illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition,

[1] S/PRST/1999/28.

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Reaffirming the inherent right to individual or collective self-defence recognized in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, which implies that States also have the right to acquire arms with which to defend themselves,

Reaffirming also the right of self-determination of all peoples, in particular peoples under colonial or other forms of alien domination or foreign occupation, and the importance of the effective realization of this right, as enunciated, *inter alia*, in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993,[2]

Concerned about the wide range of humanitarian and socio-economic consequences, affecting in particular large segments of civilian populations, exacerbated by the illicit trafficking in and the ready availability of small arms and light weapons,

Also concerned about the close link between the uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons on the one hand, and terrorism and organized crime as well as drug trafficking on the other, and stressing the importance of international efforts aimed at combating them,

Welcoming the adoption by the Disarmament Commission of the "Guidelines on conventional arms control/limitation and disarmament, with particular emphasis on consolidation of peace in the context of General Assembly resolution 51/45 N",[3]

Also welcoming the report of the Secretary-General on small arms,[4] prepared with the assistance of the Group of Governmental Experts on Small Arms pursuant to General Assembly resolution 52/38,

Bearing in mind the report of the Secretary-General on the consultations held with a group of qualified experts to examine the feasibility of carrying out a study on restricting the manufacture and trade of small arms to manufacturers and dealers authorized by States[5] and also his report on the broad-based consultations held by him pursuant to General Assembly resolution 53/77 T of 4 December 1998,[6]

Noting the replies received to date to the request of the Secretary-General to Member States for their views on his report on small arms to the fifty-second session of the General Assembly[7] and on the steps that they have taken to implement its recommendations, in particular, on the recommendation concerning the convening of an international conference on the illicit arms trade in all its aspects,[8]

Taking note of the Secretary-General's study on the problem of ammunition and explosives,[9]

Welcoming with appreciation the Secretary-General's recommendations on the international conference on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects to be convened no later than 2001[8] and the relevant recommendations contained in his report on small arms,[4]

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[2] A/CONF.156/24 (Part I), chap. III.

[3] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 42* (A/54/42), annex III.

[4] A/54/258.

[5] A/54/150.

[6] A/54/404.

[7] A/52/298.

[8] A/54/260.

[9] A/54/155.

Welcoming also the offer by the Government of Switzerland to host in Geneva, no later than 2001, an international conference on the illicit arms trade in all its aspects,

1. *Decides* to convene the conference on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects in Geneva in June/July 2001;

2. *Also decides* that the scope of the conference will be the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects;

3. *Further decides* to establish a Preparatory Committee, open to participation by all States, with the participation, as observers, of the United Nations specialized agencies, other relevant international organizations and others to be determined by the Preparatory Committee, which will hold no less than three sessions, with its first session to be held in New York, from 28 February to 3 March 2000, at which the dates and venue of its subsequent sessions will be decided;

4. *Requests* the Preparatory Committee to make recommendations to the conference on all relevant matters, including a draft agenda, draft rules of procedure and draft final documents, which will include a programme of action, and to decide on background documents to be made available in advance;

5. *Invites* all Member States, in particular those that have not yet done so, in response to the Secretary-General's note verbale of 20 January 1999, to communicate to the Secretary-General their views on the agenda and other relevant questions relating to the conference;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to transmit the replies of Member States relevant to paragraph 5 above to the Preparatory Committee and to render the Preparatory Committee and the conference all necessary assistance, including the provision of essential background information, relevant documents and summary records;

7. *Endorses* the report of the Secretary-General on small arms,[4] prepared with the assistance of the Group of Governmental Experts on Small Arms pursuant to General Assembly resolution 52/38 J;

8. *Calls upon* all Member States to implement the relevant recommendations contained in section IV of that report to the extent possible and where necessary in cooperation with appropriate international and regional organizations and/or through international and regional cooperation;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to implement the relevant recommendations contained in section IV of the report within available financial resources and with any other assistance provided by the States in a position to do so and in cooperation with appropriate international and regional organizations where necessary;

10. *Also requests* the Secretary-General, in order to assist in preventing the illicit trafficking in and illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons:

(a) To carry out, within available financial resources and with any other assistance provided by Member States in a position to do so, and with the assistance of qualified experts appointed by him in consultation with Member States, a study on the feasibility of restricting the manufacture and trade of such weapons to the manufacturers and dealers authorized by States;

(b) To extend the scope of the study to cover brokering activities, in particular illicit activities, relating to small arms and light weapons, including transportation agents and financial transactions;

(c) To submit the study as one of the background documents for the conference to be held in 2001;

11. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fifth session the item entitled "Small arms".